

RCW 18.420.050 Certification requirements. (1) Beginning July 1, 2025, except as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, the secretary shall issue a certificate to practice as a certified peer specialist to any applicant who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the secretary that the applicant meets the following requirements:

(a) Submission of an attestation to the department that the applicant self-identifies as:

(i) A person with one or more years of recovery from a mental health condition, substance use disorder, or both; or

(ii) The parent or legal guardian of a youth who is receiving or has received behavioral health services;

(b) Successful completion of the education course developed and offered by the health care authority under RCW 71.24.920;

(c) Successful passage of an oral examination administered by the health care authority upon completion of the education course offered by the health care authority under RCW 71.24.920;

(d) Successful passage of a written examination administered by the health care authority upon completion of the education course offered by the health care authority under RCW 71.24.920;

(e) Successful completion of an experience requirement of at least 1,000 supervised hours as a certified peer specialist trainee engaged in the volunteer or paid practice of peer support services, in accordance with the standards in RCW 18.420.060; and

(f) Payment of the appropriate fee required under this chapter.

(2) The secretary, with the recommendation of the *advisory committee, shall establish criteria for the issuance of a certificate to engage in the practice of peer support services based on prior experience as a peer specialist attained before July 1, 2025. The criteria shall establish equivalency standards necessary to be deemed to have met the requirements of subsection (1) of this section. An applicant under this subsection shall have until July 1, 2026, to complete any standards in which the applicant is determined to be deficient.

(3) The secretary, with the recommendation of the *advisory committee, shall issue a certificate to engage in the practice of peer support services based on completion of an apprenticeship program registered and approved under chapter 49.04 RCW and reviewed by the *advisory committee under RCW 18.420.020.

(4) A certificate to engage in the practice of peer support services is valid for two years. A certificate may be renewed upon demonstrating to the department that the certified peer specialist has successfully completed 30 hours of continuing education approved by the department. As part of the continuing education requirement, every six years the applicant must submit proof of successful completion of at least three hours of suicide prevention training and at least six hours of coursework in professional ethics and law, which may include topics under RCW 18.130.180. [2023 c 469 s 7.]

***Reviser's note:** 2023 c 469 s 4, which established the Washington state certified peer specialist advisory committee, was vetoed by the governor.